

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. An automated telephony interface for use with a telecommunications device, comprising:

a scanner; and

a session initiator, coupled to said scanner, that parses information read by said scanner, extracts a telephone number from said information and transmits a signal containing said telephone number to said telecommunications device to cause said telecommunications device to initiate a telecommunications session based thereon.

2. The interface as recited in Claim 1 wherein said telecommunications device is selected from the group consisting of:

a telephone, and

a facsimile machine.

3. The interface as recited in Claim 1 wherein said information is machine-readable information.

4. The interface as recited in Claim 1 wherein said information is contained on a calling card.

8. A method of initiating a telecommunications session,
2 comprising:

3 scanning information from a calling card;

4 parsing said information to extract therefrom a telephone
5 number; and

6 transmitting a signal containing said telephone number to a
7 telecommunications device to cause said telecommunications device
8 to initiate said telecommunications session.

9. The method as recited in Claim 8 wherein said
2 telecommunications device is selected from the group consisting of:

3 a telephone, and

4 a facsimile machine.

10. The method as recited in Claim 8 wherein said information
2 is machine-readable information.

11. The method as recited in Claim 8 wherein said information
2 on said calling card is arranged in a standard sequence.

12. The method as recited in Claim 8 wherein said information
2 comprises information about a person's business.

13. The method as recited in Claim 8 wherein said information
2 is contained on a magnetic strip.

14. The method as recited in Claim 8 wherein said information
2 is bar-coded.

15. A calling card, comprising:

human-readable information located on said calling card; and
machine-readable information located on said calling card and
being an encoded version of said human-readable information and
employable by an application without requiring a supporting
database to contain said human-readable information.

16. The calling card as recited in Claim 15 wherein said
human-readable information comprises information about a business
of a person associated with said calling card.

17. The calling card as recited in Claim 15 wherein said
machine-readable information is encoded in a magnetic strip.

18. The calling card as recited in Claim 15 wherein said
machine-readable information is encoded in a bar-coded strip.

19. The calling card as recited in Claim 15 wherein said
human-readable information and said machine-readable information
are contained on a common side of said calling card.

20. The calling card as recited in Claim 15 wherein said
machine-readable information is arranged in a standard sequence.

21. The calling card as recited in Claim 15 wherein a
2 sequence in which said machine-readable information is arranged is
3 identical to a sequence in which said human-readable information is
4 arranged.